

Linzer biol. Beitr.	44/2	1155-1158	28.12.2012
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A new species of *Mentophilonthus* from the Central African Republic (Coleoptera: Staphylinidae: Philonthina)

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A b s t r a c t : *Mentophilonthus spermophaga* nov.sp. is described from the Central African Republic and diagnosed from the similar *M. reinecki* (SCHUBERT 1902). Male genitalia and important external male characters of both species are illustrated.

K e y w o r d s : Coleoptera, Staphylinidae, Philonthina, *Mentophilonthus*, Afro-tropical region, Central African Republic, taxonomy, new species.

Introduction

The species of the philonthine genus *Mentophilonthus* LEVASSEUR 1966 (with type species *Philonthus triseriatus* BERNHAUER 1928) are similar in general habitus to those of *Philonthus* STEPHENS 1829, but differ by large and flat eyes that do not project from the outline of the head capsule. The genus may be recognized by the well-developed infraorbital ridge, reaching anteriorly at least to the mid-length of the head and mesad toward gular sutures (HROMÁDKA 2009, Figs 1-2). The African species of *Mentophilonthus* live mostly in dung of mammals or in sand, and are frequently found at light.

The examination of new material of the genus revealed an additional undescribed species of *Mentophilonthus* from the Central African Republic, which is described and illustrated below.

Material, methods and measurements

The material referred in this study is deposited in the following collections:

cHPCauthor's private collection.

ZMHBMuseum für Naturkunde der Humboldt-Universität, Berlin, Germany (Manfred Uhlig).

A double slash (/) is used to divide separate labels of type specimen. All measurements were taken from beetles with extended abdomen. Ratios mentioned in the description can be converted to lengths using the following formula: 20 units = 1 mm.

Results

Mentophilonthus spermophaga nov.sp. (Figs 1-5)

Type material: Holotype ♂: Central African Republic, Bozo, lumiere [= at light], 21.v.1981, leg. N. Degallier // holotype *Mentophilonthus spermophaga* nov.sp. Hromádka det. 2012' [red oblong printed label] (cHPC), Paratypes: 2♂♂: same label data as holotype (cHPC).

Description: Body length 8.5 mm, length of fore body (to the end of elytra) 3.6 mm.

Colouration: Head black, pronotum black-brown, scutellum and elytra brown, posterior margin of elytra widely brown-yellow, posterior fourth of elytra slightly pale-red. Abdominal tergites 1-4 black, tergites 5-7 brown-yellow. Maxillary and labial palpi black, ventral side of antennomere 1 and base of antennomere 2 yellow, dorsal side of antennomere 1 and remaining antennomeres black-brown, femora yellow-brown, tibiae and tarsi dark brown.

Head suborbicular, slightly wider than long (ratio 24 : 22), distinctly narrowed anteriorly, posterior angles indistinct, each bearing one long black bristle. Eyes flat and much longer than temples (ratio 16 : 9), inner side of each eye with one coarse puncture in the middle, posterior margin with two punctures arranged in vertical row. Temporal area impunctate. Surface with very fine microsculpture consisting of transverse waves. Antennae slender and long, reaching posterior fifth of pronotum when reclined. Antennomeres 1-3 distinctly longer than wide, antennomeres 4-8 and 11 slightly longer than wide, antennomeres 9-10 as long as wide.

Pronotum highly convex, distinctly narrowed anteriorly. Anterior angles conspicuously deflexed, vaguely obtusely rounded, bearing several bristles of variable length, posterior angles markedly rounded. Each dorsal row with two coarse punctures, each sublateral row with one puncture situated behind level between puncture 1-2 in dorsal row. Lateral margins each bearing one long black bristle in anterior third. Surface with microsculpture similar to that on head.

Scutellum densely and finely punctured, diameter of punctures slightly larger than eye-facets, distance between punctures smaller than puncture diameter. Surface with very fine microsculpture; setation dark.

Elytra wider than long (ratio 46 : 40), slightly widened posteriorly. Punctuation similar to that on scutellum, longitudinal row of three larger punctures situated at midwidth of each elytron. Surface between punctures without microsculpture; setation brown-yellow.

Legs. Metatarsus as long as metatibia, metatarsomere 1 longer than metatarsomere 5, longer than metatarsomeres 2-3 combined.

Abdomen wide, gradually narrowed posteriorly, first three visible tergites with two basal lines, elevated area between lines impunctate. Punctuation at base of all tergites much finer and much sparser than that on elytra, becoming sparser towards posterior margin of each tergite. Surface without microsculpture; setation similar to that on elytra.

Male. Protarsomeres 1-3 only weakly dilated, scarcely sub-bilobed, ventral side covered with modified pale setae, protarsomere 4 narrower than preceding ones. Sternite VIII (Fig. 5), aedeagus (Figs 1-4).

Female. Unknown.

Comparative notes: *Mentophilonthus spermophaga* nov.sp. may be distinguished from the most similar species *M. reinecki* SCHUBERT 1902 by the darker antennae, tibiae and tarsi, wider elytra and by the different shape of the aedeagus..

Etymology: The name of this species, a noun in apposition, is the Latin generic name of the African Western bluebill *Spermophaga haematina* (VIEILLOT 1805).

Distribution: Central African Republic, known only from the type locality.

***Mentophilonthus reinecki* (SCHUBERT 1902) (Figs. 6-10)**

Material examined: Holotype ♂, Natal, Pietermaritzburg (ZMHB).

Distribution: South Africa, Kenya, Tanzania.

Detailed description: HROMÁDKA 2009: 144.

Acknowledgements

I wish to express my thanks to Martin Fikáček (National Museum, Praha, Czech Republic) for help with preparing the manuscript.

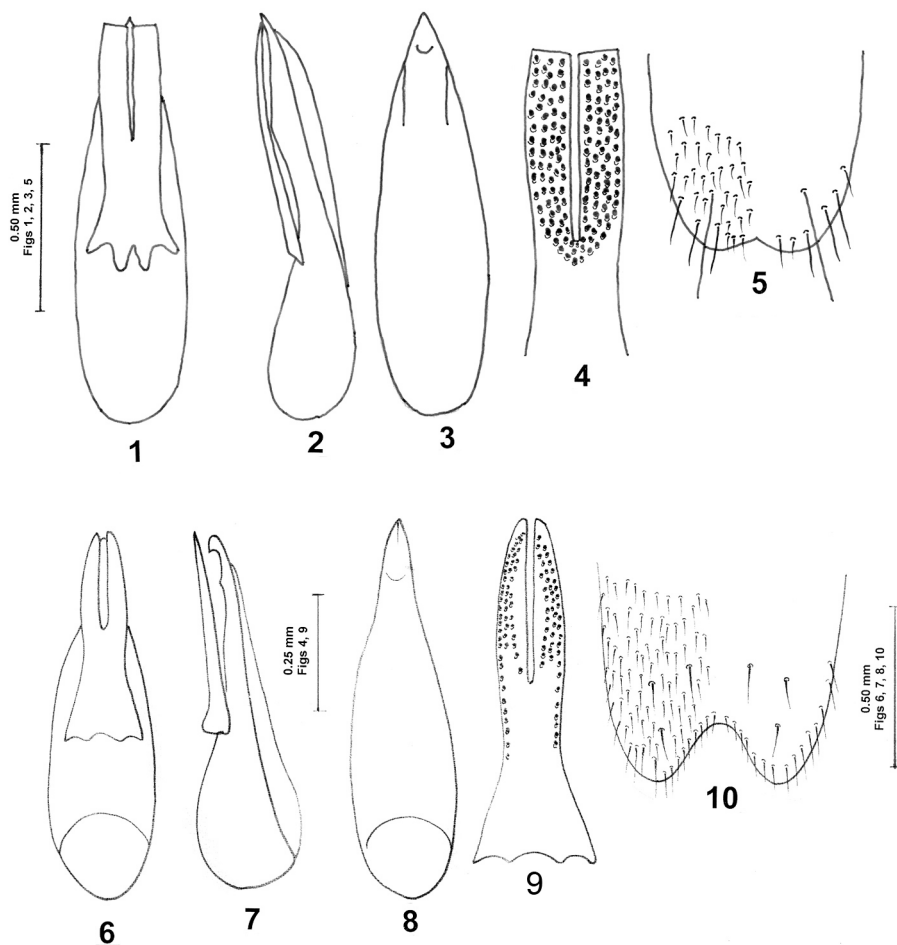
Zusammenfassung

Mentophilonthus spermophaga nov.sp. wird von der Zentralafrikanische Republic beschrieben und von der ähnlichen *M. reinecki* (SCHUBERT 1902) unterschieden. Die äußeren Merkmale sowie die männlichen Geschlechtsmerkmale beider Arten werden abgebildet.

References

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Figs 1-5: *Mentophilonthus spermophaga* nov.sp. (1) aedeagus, ventral view, (2) aedeagus – lateral view, (3) aedeagus without paramere, ventral view, (4) apex of paramere with sensory peg setae, (5) apical portion of male sternite VIII, ventral view.

Figs 6-10: *Mentophilonthus reinecki* (SCHUBERT 1902) comb. nov. (6) aedeagus – ventral view, (7) aedeagus, lateral view, (8) aedeagus without paramere, ventral view, (9) underside of paramere with sensory peg setae, (10) apical portion of male sternite VIII, ventral view.